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MAITLAND, Fla. — The victims of the "Halloween massacre" may soon be vindicated. They were the old Central Intelligence Agency hands summarily dismissed by Admiral Stansfield Turner in a large-scale purge on Oct. 31, 1977, because he "preferred to get new young people, to promote promotions and flowthrough." Most of them were highly trained and experienced intelligence officers of the senior and middle levels; some were station chiefs in London, Vienna, Bonn, Ottawa, and Latin America. It is said in Washington that William J. Casey, the new Director of Central Intelligence, will bring back many of these former "spooks" to rehabilitate the "plant."

Severe criticism of the C.I.A.'s effectiveness has been leveled by friend and foe. Some say that it has failed to forecast turmoil in the world's trouble spots because it has relied heavily on technology instead of using human agents on the scene. Others complain that shortages of electronic means, spy satellites, and trained analysts are responsible for faulty estimates. The truth is somewhere in between.

More distressing is the often heard charge that the White House has used the Agency as a tool to justify predetermined policy, rather than as a means of providing policy makers with solid information as a basis for sound decision-making. This charge, if true, would be contrary to Congress's intent in creating the C.I.A. The National Security Act of 1947 directs the Agency to collect, evaluate, and provide the policy makers with processed intelligence. The act also states that the C.I.A. will perform such other functions and duties as the National Security Council may direct. By implication, the C.I.A. has been directed by the Council to conduct clandestine operations, political and economic warfare, and "dirty tricks." These are not intelligence activities, but a dubious means of carrying out national policy.

To prove this point, critics focus on the Agency's role in restoring the Shah of Iran to power in 1963, its support of his secret police, the Savak, and its failure to accurately assess the situation in 1978-79 that led to the attack on our embassy in Teheran. If the C.I.A. had anything to do with these events, it was not performing an intelligence role but simply carrying out predetermined national policy.

Bringing Back 'Spooks' To Revitalize the 'Plant'

By Archimedes L. A. Patti

Friend and foe also recall the Agency's shortcomings in 1961: the Bay of Pigs fiasco, the failure to give adequate warning of the construction of the Berlin Wall, and the rift between Syria and the United Arab Republic.

Our greatest failure since Pearl Harbor, some say, involved the surprise deployment of Soviet missiles in Cuba. Despite aerial surveillance, they went undetected for more than a year until mid-September 1962. Why? A Senate committee concluded that the C.I.A. had ignored reports from Cuban refugees and exiles, considered biased and unreliable, and that there was a "predisposition of the intelligence community to the philosophical conviction that it would be incompatible with Soviet policy to introduce strategic missiles in Cuba."

Evidently our intelligence chiefs have lost sight of their responsibility to produce timely and evaluated intelligence. Unquestionably these failures existed long before Admiral Turner took over the C.I.A. in March 1977, but his infatuation with technology and inexperience in intelligence operations de-emphasized the trained field operative and the specialized analyst in Washington in favor of more-glamorous devices. His decision to eliminate field operatives perpetuated the Agency's deficiency in determining intent.

Radar, satellites, and listening devices can and do produce hard information, but they cannot tell us *when* or *why* an action will be taken — in other words, the *intent*.

Jimmy Carter admitted in November 1978 that he had been "concerned that the trend... to get intelligence from electronic means might have been overemphasized" and had asked his aides to improve methods for gathering information on sensitive developments abroad. This has not been done.

The C.I.A. seriously needs rehabilitation, especially in the area of valid estimates. Nothing is more crucial in international affairs than the relationship between intelligence and policy, or, put differently, between knowledge and action. Here is where the C.I.A. has been weakest. Too often our decision-makers have not had the benefit of adequate intelligence, skillfully synthesized into valid estimates.

One hopes that the Casey team will return to the basic precepts of intelligence — the use of people to collect, analyze, and report information. Not that technology should be abandoned; rather, it should assist and augment the field operative and analyst. Only humans can make value judgments and forecast intent.

Archimedes L. A. Patti, who served in various military-political intelligence posts, though never for the Central Intelligence Agency, from 1969 to 1971 was a staff member of the Executive Office of the President, specializing in crisis management and national security affairs. He is author of "Why Viet Nam?"